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## Agency News

### Honoring our Fallen Officers

On May 8, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice held its 16th Annual Fallen Officers' Memorial Ceremony at the Texas Prison Museum's Sesquicentennial Plaza, honoring the men and women who have given their lives in the line of duty. This year's event was especially significant as TDCJ officers Christopher Davis and Eligio Garcia were added to the list of honorees.



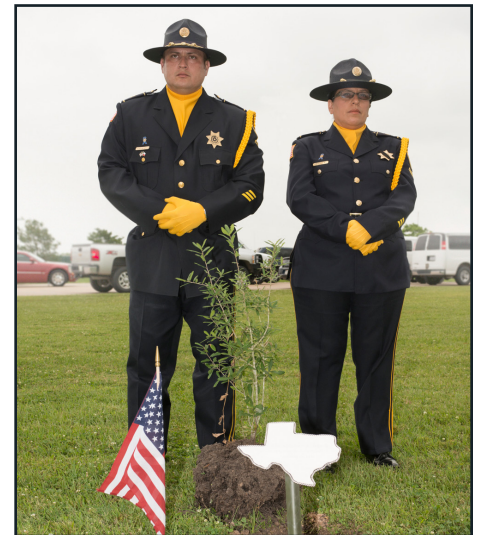
**TDCJ Correctional Officer V Derek Dennis stands guard at the Missing Officers' Table at the Fallen Officers' Memorial ceremony in Huntsville. The table represents survivor's enduring memories of those who lost their lives in the line of duty.**

TDCJ Executive Director Brad Livingston served as keynote speaker, noting that "This ceremony is a reminder of the extraordinary sacrifice that individuals like Officer Davis and Officer Garcia make while performing daily acts of heroism. Correctional officers are courageous professionals who work in

one of the toughest jobs of all." The executive director went on to say, "This ceremony, and similar ones held at units throughout the state, serves to demonstrate the respect we, as an agency, have for these heroes. It deepens our resolve to always keep them in our memory."

On January 15, correctional officers Christopher Davis, Eligio Garcia and Jason Self were transporting offenders from the Middleton Unit in Abilene to the Sanchez Unit in El Paso when their bus hit a patch of ice. The vehicle left the roadway and collided with a moving train. Officers Davis and Garcia died as a result of the crash. Correctional Officer Jason Self is still recovering from his injuries. Correctional Institutions Division Director Bill Stephens commented on the TDCJ officers lost in the tragic accident, as well as the other criminal justice professionals who gave their lives in the line of duty, saying, "We are here to honor the memory of TDCJ employees and all correctional workers across the nation who have made the ultimate sacrifice for the safety and well-being of others. We recognize the loss of each, and acknowledge that each is worthy of commendation for courageous and dedicated service."

Seventy live oak trees now dot the landscape surrounding the Sesquicentennial Plaza,



**Captain Luis Hernandez (left) and Sergeant Claudia Loera stand behind one of two live oaks planted on the grounds of the Sesquicentennial Plaza in honor of officers Davis and Garcia. The plaza now contains 70 trees, each a living memorial to a fallen TDCJ colleague.**

each a memorial to a fallen officer. Texas Board of Criminal Justice Chairman Oliver Bell presented two new trees to the Living Memorial as members of the Davis and Garcia families looked on, and as he presented the trees he told those assembled, "As you walk through this memorial, now and in the future, I ask that you don't feel sorrow, instead feel joy and pride for the individuals we're remembering. Their lives had purpose, they left a mark and their memories live on." ●